

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE FIGHTS PREDATORY LENDING

COUNTRYWIDE FINANCIAL 10,000 HOMEOWNERS ASSISTED, \$6.7 M. PROVIDED TO VICTIMS



The Attorney General's Office negotiated a major settlement with Countrywide Financial, one of the nation's largest mortgage lenders, resulting from allegations of predatory lending including misleading marketing techniques and incentives for selling loans with risky features.

The settlement provides assistance for more than 10,000 homeowners to help them stay in their homes, saving them approximately \$129 million as a result of more favorable lending terms.

Countrywide must also pay \$9.9 million to victims of deceptive mortgage loans, local governments and charitable institutions to help fight the devastating effects of the mortgage foreclosure crisis. The bulk of these funds will go toward approximately 3,700 individuals who will receive \$1,800 each.

United Way of Southeastern Michigan received \$1.2 million to help fund its 2-1-1 family crisis telephone hotline, which provides thousands of people each month with help with issues ranging from mortgage foreclosure to utility payments to health care needs. A total of \$500,000 went to Heart of West Michigan United Way, while another \$250,000 went to Focus: HOPE in Detroit.

Michigan's five largest cities – Detroit, Grand Rapids, Warren, Flint and Sterling Heights -- will each receive \$250,000. The purpose of these funds will be to provide foreclosure relief and to reinvigorate neighborhoods that have been ravaged by the current economy.

Funding from this settlement also went to sponsoring another series of Avoid Foreclosure forums across the state, including Detroit, Saginaw and Grand Rapids. These forums bring together the state and nation's largest lenders and servicers so that homeowners at risk of losing their home can meet face to face with a real, live individual and try to work out a loan.

AMERIQUEST 28,000 CONSUMERS RECEIVE \$13.8 MILLION

Another settlement, this one with the Ameriquest Mortgage Company, resulted in nearly 28,000 Michigan consumers becoming eligible for \$13.8 million in restitution as part of a national agreement resulting from predatory lending lawsuits brought against Ameriquest and its related companies.



The settlement resolves allegations that Ameriquest misrepresented and failed to adequately disclose the complete terms of home loans, charged excessive loan origination fees and improperly inflated appraisals.

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF PREDATORY LENDING?

If you feel you may have been a victim of predatory lending, you should immediately file a complaint with Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. You can file your complaint online at: <https://secure.ag.state.mi.us/complaints/consumer.aspx>; or print out the form at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/ag/Consumer_Complaint_Form_346645_7.pdf and mail or fax to the Consumer Protection Division at:

**Consumer Protection Division
P.O. Box 30213-7713
Lansing, MI 48909**

**Toll Free No: 1- 877-765-8388
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